

Application No. 09/709,045

Lentz

Amendment Under C.F.R. 1.116 Expedited Prosecution

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

1-22: Canceled.

23. (New) A method of enhancing an immune response in a patient having soluble cytokine receptor molecules in the blood which inhibit the immune response, the method comprising:

- (a) obtaining whole blood from the patient;
- (b) separating plasma from the blood;
- (c) contacting the plasma with at least one cytokine receptor inhibitor selected from the group consisting of antibodies or antibody fragments binding to soluble cytokine receptor molecules, and cytokine molecules or epitopes thereof binding to soluble cytokine receptor molecules;
- (d) removing soluble cytokine receptor molecules bound to the cytokine receptor inhibitor from the plasma; and
- (e) returning the plasma from which the soluble cytokine receptor molecules have been removed to the patient.

24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the cytokine receptor inhibitor is immobilized in a solid support or membrane.

25. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies are recombinant.

26. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies are in a mixture of antibodies immunoreactive with the soluble cytokine receptor molecules.

27. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the patient is human.

Application No. 09/709,045

Lentz

Amendment Under C.F.R. 1.116 Expedited Prosecution

28. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor is selected from the group consisting of soluble receptors for tumor necrosis factors alpha and beta.

29. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor molecule is a TNF receptor.

30. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies or antibody fragments are monoclonal.

31. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments are recombinant.

32. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with antibodies or antibody fragments.

33. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with polyclonal antibodies or antibody fragments.

34. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments.

35. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with the cytokines or cytokine epitopes.

36. (New) The method of claim 34, wherein the monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments are recombinant.

37. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the blood is separated into plasma by filtration.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the filtration is ultrafiltration.

39. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the method is repeated.